



THE *Original* DENTON DISTRICT

HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE

The Original Denton District is buzzing with artistic activity, but unique cultural assets, heritage sites, and stories abound throughout the District. Here is a sampling of the other cultural assets that make the Original Denton District such a distinctive artistic and cultural area.

Denton Historic Courthouse on the Square: The most iconic and recognizable structure in Denton is the beautiful Historic Courthouse on the Square. Built in 1896 as the Denton County Courthouse, the building was set on the highest elevation in Denton and could be seen for miles around. Its distinctive towers and intricate caps and columns make this building a memorable icon for residents and visitors. In 1970, the Courthouse was named a Recorded Texas Historic Landmark and it was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1977. To this day, the Courthouse remains among the most beautiful and revered buildings in Denton County and a centerpiece of the Denton community.

Quakertown (Civic Center/Quakertown Park and Southeast Denton): In the mid to late 1800s, Denton's African-American community established a thriving neighborhood a few blocks north of the downtown Square. Named in honor of the Quakers that supported Abolition, Quakertown was home to a school, businesses, restaurants, churches, and several community organizations. In 1921, the Denton City Commission was presented a petition to hold a bond election to purchase all of the land in Quakertown and turn it into a park. Once the bond election passed, residents of Quakertown were forced to sell their land and property or have it removed to a site on the other side of the railroad tracks (now called Southeast Denton). The park, originally named Civic Center Park, became the home of Denton's City Hall, Emily Fowler Central Library, Civic Center, and Senior Center. In 2007, the park was renamed to Quakertown Park to honor to community that was forced out and segregated due to racial inequalities at the time.

Fred Moore: Fred Moore was born Jan. 1, 1875 to Mary Jane Goodall, an African-American whose parents had been slaves. Moore dedicated his life to education, earning a teachers certificate and eventually becoming principal of the African-American school in Denton in 1915. For the next 40 years, Moore impacted generations of Denton students by a strict code of conduct (see below). Moore was an honored and respected citizen of Denton and landmarks such as Fred Moore High School, Fred Moore Park, and Fred Moore Day Nurse School, all located inside ODD, were named in his honor.

Moore's Education Philosophy:

Exercise self-control; control tongues, thoughts, temper and actions.



Be thrifty.
Never ridicule or defile the character of another.
Keep your self-respect and help others to keep theirs.
Kindness; be kind in thoughts and never despise anyone.
Be kind in speech, never gossip or speak unkindly of others.
Good health is important. Keep yourself clean in body and mind.
Be self-reliant, but listen to the advice of wiser and older people.
Develop independence and wisdom.
Act according to what seems right and fair.
Never fear being laughed at for doing what is right.
Be brave. A coward does not make a good citizen.
Always play fair. Never cheat.
Always treat your opponents with courtesy.

Oakwood Cemetery: The Oakwood Cemetery was established soon after Denton was settled as the new seat of government for Denton County in 1857. Land for the community burial ground was donated by pioneer settler Hiram Cisco and the earliest grave is that of a Mrs. Wilson, who died during childbirth while traveling through the area in a covered wagon. Other interments at this site include those of Jesse M. Blount, who helped plat the town of Denton and later served as county treasurer, county judge and state senator; Colonel Thomas Gynn Cosby Davis, a cousin of Confederate President Jefferson Davis and a friend of U.S. President Abraham Lincoln; and many prominent early leaders of the town and county. Officially named Oakwood Cemetery in 1931, this burial ground now serves as a historic reminder of the pioneers who first settled here and who led in the development of the area.

O'Neil Ford: Mid-20th Century American architect O'Neil Ford left an indelible mark on Denton through his works. Ford, named a National Historic Landmark by the National Council on the Arts, designed the historic Little Chapel in the Woods, Emily Fowler Central Library, Denton City Hall, and Denton Civic Center. His works included custom doors, strong windows, and a sense of the importance of preservation, all of which are proudly on display in this beloved local landmarks.

City Hall West: Originally built in 1927 as the Denton City Hall, City Hall West has been used as fire station, police station, development services center, and City Hall. The building currently sits vacant, but its unique history and landmark status make it a prime candidate for redevelopment and historic preservation in the District.

Denton Ghost Stories/Tour: Denton's fascinating history lends itself to stories that entice, spook, and scare visitors and residents alike. The Ghosts of Denton Tour offers patrons a unique take on Denton's past by focusing on lingering spirits, suspicious deaths, and the more haunting histories of Denton.

Denton County Historical Park: Denton County Historical Park is a hub of history and culture in the District. Home to the Bayless-Selby House, Quakertown House, Wood House, and Taylor



Log Cabin, the Park offers visitors a chance to go back in time to discover the Denton of the past. The Park also plays an important role in Denton's present and future, playing host to many cultural events, such as the Denton Community Market and Denton Farmers' Market.